

Sixth Grade Writing Lesson #1 with Narrative Prompt

Title:	My Place in the Family
Grade:	Sixth Grade
Core Standards:	4060-0801 4060-0802
Objective/Purpose:	To organize and draft a narrative paper using a graphic organizer
Time Required:	2-3 class periods
Teacher Materials:	Book for read-aloud and discussion (select one) <i>My Rotten, Redheaded Older Brother</i> , Patricia Polacco <i>Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing</i> , Judy Blume <i>The Summer of the Swans</i> , Betsy Byars "Salvador Late or Early," Sandra Cisneros (short story from <i>Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories</i>) <i>Julius, the Baby of the World</i> , Kevin Henke
Student Materials:	Graphic organizer Writing paper Pencil

What to Do:

1. Discuss with the class the following questions: What does "place in the family" mean? What is your place the family? How do you feel about your place?
2. Read aloud from one of the suggested books.
3. Complete the graphic organizer as a whole class. Using characters from the read-aloud, show how a paragraph with a main idea and supporting details develops.
4. Model a second graphic organizer for the whole class, using your own life experience.
5. Ask students to complete their own graphic organizers using one type you have taught and used.

6. Model for students how to create paragraphs using the information listed in each category on the graphic organizer (using a main idea and 4-5 supporting sentences with details).
7. Have students draft a paper using the completed graphic organizer. (Remind students to address the paper to a specific audience.)
8. Allow students to share excerpts from their drafts with small groups.
9. With the permission of student writers, place several sample papers on an overhead and discuss them as a class.
10. Using the Six Traits rubric, have the class score several papers.

Writing Prompt: Everyone has a place in a family. Write a paper telling the reader of the advantages and disadvantages of **your** place.

Student Paper #1
(Sixth Grade Student)

Title: "Not That Bad!"

NOT THAT
BAD!

The Middle: squished between one thing and another. That's what I am. The middle child. Never been a middle child? Let me enlighten you on the experience.

I hate chores! Chores are so annoying! Though our chores are socialistic, and spread out amongst my Sister, Brother, and I, it feels as if I've got all the responsibility. When I want to play, another chore always comes up. "Sure, you can play," is what my brother always hears.

My brother and my sister are qualified hindrances. My brother is like Ares, the god of war. He likes to start quarrels, but if he's hurt, oh no, he goes bawling to mom, who punishes with an iron fist of fury. My sister gets in my face and won't back off. Lash at her and she turns into an angry bull. My sister and brother are both very gullible and are prone to fall for my pranks.

Do you know what it is like to get nothing new? I do! Every year I would get a garbage bag full of old, ratty, stinky, old clothes. Hand-me-downs, they're called, but hand-me-downs are no longer required. This year, I've out-grown my sister, so hand-me-downs are now hand me ups!

**Student Paper #1: Scores
(Sixth Grade Student)**

Six Traits Scores and Commentary

Title: “Not That Bad!”

IDEAS AND CONTENT: [5]

The writer uses a personal experience. There are excellent main ideas with supporting details. The writer shows control of the subject. The writing is enlightening and entertaining.

ORGANIZATION: [5]

The writer has produced a solid introduction and conclusion. The details follow the main ideas with effective transitions. The writing is well balanced.

SENTENCE FLUENCY: [5]

The writing is natural, powerful, and graceful. Sentences begin differently; some sentences are long and some are short. The writer uses fragments well. Questions lead to explanations.

WORD CHOICE: [5]

There are many well-chosen words used accurately; words are also striking but natural. Expressions are fresh and appealing; there is no slang. Verbs and adjectives are strong and colorful. The writer uses similes to pull the reader in.

VOICE: [5]

The writer addresses the audience in a natural way. Similes and metaphors are used naturally, leaving the reader wanting more. There is a connection that comes from “knowing” the writer.

CONVENTIONS: [5]

Spelling, punctuation, and quotation marks are used accurately.

Student Paper #2
(Sixth Grade Student)

Title: "The Oldest"

The Oldest

My life was perfect. I was the first child, and the first grandchild too. My grandparents spoiled me rotten! It was heaven. Then my sister was born...

My sister Megan is now nine. I have a brother, his name is Nick he's five. Everyone in the whole entire world thinks my brother is a little cutie, except me. When he escapes in my house the little rodent changes into a speeding rocket. Onfourchantly, I babysitt the two good-for-nothing monsters. The race, screech and fight just to make me furious. Being the oldest definitely has its ups and downs. One up is you receive everything first. One down, even though there are tons, is have to babysitt every second of the day.

My life isn't totally "picked on." I'm the oldest. I do get everything first, but I have to share every single thing I own. One day I was in my own room just minding my own

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business then my little witchlike sister Megan raced by like a hand saw sperting out sparks left and right chopping everything in her tracks. I just whisper to myself "I'm glad I'm not out there and you would too."

Friends, my brother and I are buddies, but my sister Megan. NO way! We can't last a single second with out killing each other. Megan, she's a little pest. She is like a time bomb. You never know when she'll explode.

We'll I hope you had a good time. If you want I'll be happy to take your position for a few days.

**Student Paper #2
(Sixth Grade Student)**

Six Traits Scores and Commentary

Title: “The Oldest”

IDEAS AND CONTENT: [5]

The writer uses a catchy beginning. Ideas are well connected, balanced, and hold the reader’s attention. The writer successfully weaves a narrative throughout the paper.

ORGANIZATION: [5]

Excellent beginning and conclusion. There are well developed ideas that move from one paragraph to another.

SENTENCE FLUENCY: [4]

Sentences are generally well-crafted, but the writer begins several paragraphs the same way.

WORD CHOICE: [5]

Words are specific and used accurately. The writer uses strong imagery with similes throughout. The paper is fresh and captivating.

VOICE: [5]

The writer took some risks to put across the story. The language brings life to the writing.

CONVENTION: [5]

Grammar, spelling, and punctuation are generally correct. The student has written enough text to demonstrate understanding of conventions.

Student Paper #3
(Sixth Grade Student)

Title: "Only Child"

Only Child

At my house I have some jobs. I don't have to work as hard in winter because of the snow. In the summer I mow the lawn. How I wish I had a brother to take a turn at the hot and sweaty job. Being the only child mean only I git the jobs.

I wish I had a older brother to be my friend. He could help me with my homework. He could stick up for me and be my protector. My chores would be lighter because he could do the heaviest labor.

Yet I'm the only child and I have all the chores with a very little allowance. ~~a matter~~ of fact usually I have no allowance at all. Where dose the money all go? No, other kid are beggin

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for it! However usually when I ask for cash I get it.

The good things about being an only child are I have my mom my Grand parents who spoil me and love. I go on cool vacations and some times get to take friends.

**Student Paper #3: Scores
(Sixth Grade Student)**

Six Traits Scores and Commentary

Title: “Only Child”

IDEAS AND CONTENT: [4]

The writer has a main idea and supporting details. The ideas are connected. The writer has given some specific points, but the content should be stronger.

ORGANIZATION: [3]

The introduction and conclusion are weak. Some transitions are effective; others are weak. The pace is good but could have been smoother.

SENTENCE FLUENCY: [3]

Sentences are all generally short, but with good beginnings.

WORD CHOICE: [3]

Meaning is generally clear, but word choices do not distinguish the paper.

VOICE: [4]

The student starts out writing about wanting a brother, but does not sustain the voice.

CONVENTIONS: [3]

There are some spelling errors. Commas are missing, where needed. Several word endings are missing an “s.”

Student Paper #4
(Sixth Grade Student)

Title: "Are You the Youngest?"

Are you the Youngest?

Are you drowning in a sea of being the youngest.
That is my place and this is how it feels.

For our jobs my older brothers don't have to do anything. I have to do smelly disgusting dog poop. In the summers my brother only has to do the lawn, another stinking job is dog poop, garbage, it is my job too.

Money is hard to get. What you have to do is question Mom, be pleasing, or whine to her, But she usually doesn't give you money as hard as you can. At our house we don't get allowance, but I'm the youngest. I have to do all the work to earn a few bucks. My brothers have money thrown at them.

In our family there are 3 boys no girls and I was the youngest. Usually my brothers whine to get out of every thing. I have to work to get stuff, But my brother whines to get stuff. Perhaps I need to practice whinning!

Do you have freindships in our family. I don't. Me and my brother fight over the remote. On the weekends when I'm in the shower he knocks on the door when I'm in there for 5 min and when I get out he just get's in there for 30min.

Being the youngest is not always bad, but I'll be glad when I'm a little older.

**Student Paper #4: Scores
(Sixth Grade Student)**

Six Traits Scores and Commentary

Title: “Are You the Youngest?”

IDEAS AND CONTENT: [3]

Ideas are not developed thoroughly. The paper lacks depth.

ORGANIZATION: [3]

The paper shows good organization and conclusions, but it lacks effective transitions. Some details confuse rather than clarify.

SENTENCE FLUENCY: [3]

Sentences are choppy and simplistic. Variety is missing; most sentences are the same length and start the same way.

WORD CHOICE: [3]

Style is conversational but ineffective. There are vague references rather than precise word choices.

VOICE: [3]

The writing is mundane; it lacks personality.

CONVENTIONS: [3]

Periods and capitals are missing in several sections. Abbreviations are used instead of complete words. Digits are used when numbers should be spelled out.